

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
JOINT COMMITTEE on PUBLIC SAFETY & TRANSPORTATION
AND ORDINANCE
PUBLIC HEARING
MONDAY, APRIL 9, 2012
6:00 PM**

ATTENDANCE

Committee on Public Safety and Transportation

Council members: Co-chairs; Lyons and Colon; Taylor-Moye, dePara, Olson

Committee on Ordinances

Council members: Co-chair Blunt, Bonney, Martinez, M. McCarthy

Non-Committee

Council President McCarthy, Brantley, Brannelly

Co-chair Lyons called the public hearing to order at 6:15 pm.

She announced that there was a sign up sheet for the public and she noted that each speaker would have two minutes to address the committees.

She introduced the council members that were present from both committees.

- 1) Proposed Resolution to enforce a curfew for Youth, age sixteen years and younger. (Item #39-11)

Clyde Nicholson – stated that he was there to speak against the curfew. He stated that although there have been many killings in Bridgeport recently, he felt there could be problems putting kids under the age of 16 on house arrest. He emphasized that one life is too many to lose; however, most of the killings have occurred during the day time. He expressed that if one child commits a murder, it then becomes a restriction for many youth that aren't in trouble. He questioned why the city isn't doing something about illegal guns. He stressed that the crime rate is up, but the arrest rate is down for gun violations. He said he felt imposing a curfew would relate to a violation of one's civil rights. He repeated that the key to addressing the high crime rate is to get guns off the street.

Amos Brown Sr.- stated that he spoke to a few people about the curfew and he agreed that some innocent youth may be punished. He felt the police should focus more attention on group and gang gatherings. He said they should be frisked and any guns should be retrieved that may be found. He commented that he felt like “we” are being treated like we're in Africa. He emphasized that a law should be proposed that is strong enough and reads that if a person murders someone; they will go to prison. He stressed that the city has lost too many already.

Cheryl Butler - stated that she was for the curfew because she has a 16-year old and an 11-year old. She mentioned that she is a single mother and she works late sometimes up to 10:00 pm or 11:00 pm. She admitted that sometimes kids don't listen and a curfew will offer some authority. She said she also liked the idea of a curfew because she wants her kids in the house at a certain time. She stated that although people can get killed in many ways; with the curfew, the police and the parents involved, this will teach kids that the purpose of the curfew is to protect children. Overall, she said she felt it was a community issue for everyone to address.

Wayne Winston – stated that a curfew is fine, but he thought they needed more to address the problem. He stressed that a curfew alone is not enough. He said they need parental involvement and not have to rely solely on the police. He mentioned that there are many holes in the process. He had a concern that if a child is taken in and then a fine is imposed on a parent that might already be struggling financially. He was adamant that more programs were needed and more funding should be allocated towards them.

Steve Almeida - stated that he was a native of Bridgeport. He said in regard to a curfew he supported it. He recalled that as a youth a curfew was set by his parents and when they weren't around; aunts and uncles looked out for him. However, he pointed out that many kids don't have that kind of family support. He further stressed that he was tired of hearing about other kids being murdered. He said he was fully committed to doing whatever he can to address the problem and so kids know there are some positive people out there to help. He emphasized that he was fully engaged in the welfare of a child.

There were none heard.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER T. McCARTHY MOVED TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING**
**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Co-chair Lyons closed the public hearing at 6:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham
Telesco Secretarial Services